

Your Birthday in History

Concept(s) Historical Significance, Continuity and Change

Prepared for Grade(s) 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Province BC

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Time Period(s) Pre-1600, 1600-1700, 1700-1800, 1800-1900, 1900-present

Time allotment 5-6 classes

Brief Description of the Task

Have your students explore BC history and the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking concept Historical Significance. Students will discover noteworthy events that happened on their birth dates in BC history. Students will be asked to produce a Historica Fairs project. Research, interpretive and presentation skills will be highlighted while working with history relevant to each student.

Required Knowledge & Skills

Students should be able to complete the task without much background knowledge, however, the teacher

may glean richer responses if students have fuller background knowledge of Canadian history. Experience working with primary source material and familiarity with the Benchmarks concept Historical Significance are helpful but not essential.

Recommended Resources:

[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[Historica Fairs](#)

Required Materials:

- Textbooks • various
- British Columbia 150 Years Calendar by Historica
- Independent research tools and documentation

Detailed Instructions

Lesson Preparation

Examine the School Fair Planning Guide and the Fairs Exhibit Guide attachments for planning your own school Historica Fair.

1. Background on Historical Significance: if the students have not been introduced to the concept of Historical Significance they will need some background. The teacher will need to introduce the concept to build on students' prior knowledge and guide their thinking. To explain this topic clearer have the students look up Louis Riel, Champlain or Trudeau in their textbooks, then have them look up a friend or relative. Ask students to explain why one is there and the other not.

2. Continue to explain that the past is everything that ever happened to anyone anywhere. We cannot remember or learn it all. We put effort into learning about and remembering that which is historically significant, but we need to reflect on how those choices are made. Many people simply take what is presented to them (by the textbook or teachers) to be significant, but among historians and people who care about history there is often much debate. Because so many people look to history to help them understand their lives and the world they live in, it is important to understand what the debate is all about.

3. If possible, ask students to brainstorm reasons why the author of their textbook included certain topics and not their relatives. Look at the topics in the table of contents or index and ask them to decide why these were included.

4. Help students explore historical significance. As a class identify the Benchmarks criteria for historical significance and compile a list.

1) Results in deep, long lasting change that influences many people.

2) Reveals something about the past.

3) Sheds light on contemporary issues or is relevant to us today.

4) Or is part of a larger, meaningful narrative.

5. Have the students examine the calendar and find their birthday or the birthday of a relative or friend. If the date block for the day they choose is blank, they may use the closest date that includes an event.

6. Asks students what happened on their days in BC history. Ask them if the event is historically significant. Have students complete the Historical Significance Activity Sheet. You may want students to complete this in small groups or individually, depending on their grade level or experience working with the concept of Historical Significance.

7. Have students do further Internet and library research on their topics and events, collecting relevant information and images. Students should complete an Historica Fairs project. Ideas for format and instructions for students are outlined in the Fairs Exhibit Guide. Be sure to hand out the Historica Fairs Rubric so students will have a clear understanding of all assessment criteria.

8. Conduct a school or class Historica Fair. As part of their project, conduct an interview with each student to assess their overall knowledge of the subject. Pay specific attention to a student's ability to relate to the historical significance of her/his subject.

Extension

Submit your class or school Fairs projects to a Historica Regional Fair. Consult the Historica Fairs website to determine the location of the closest Regional Fair.

[Historica Fairs](#)

You may also consult Becky Burns at 1-877-739-4056 or the BC Provincial Coordinator Gail Sumanik at gsumanik@historica.ca

Outcomes

Concepts in Historical Thinking:

Note: this lesson may encompass many of the Benchmarks for Historical Thinking concepts depending on the direction the students take the project; however, this lesson plan focuses on historical significance.

Historical Significance

Students will be able to demonstrate how an event, person or development is significant by showing how it is embedded in a larger, meaningful narrative.

Aspects of Historical Significance:

- Resulting in change. The event/person/development had deep consequences, for many people, over a long period of time.
- Revealing. The event/person/development sheds light on enduring or emerging issues in history and contemporary life or was important at some stage in history within the collective memory of a group or groups.

BC Prescribed Learning Outcomes

For all Grades:

- Plan and conduct library and community research using primary and secondary print and non-print sources, including electronic sources.
- Generate and critique different interpretations of primary and secondary sources.
- Assess and defend a variety of positions on controversial issues.
- Apply critical thinking, including questioning, comparing, summarizing, drawing conclusions and defending a position, to make reasoned judgments about a range of issues, situations and topics.

Grade 5:

Applications of Social Studies

You should expect students to be able to:

- identify and clarify a problem, issue or inquiry;
- gather and record a body of information from a variety of primary and secondary sources;
- develop alternative interpretations from varied sources;
- defend a position on a regional issue in light of alternative perspectives;
- design, implement and assess strategies to address community problems or projects.

Grade 8:

Applications of Social Studies

You should expect students to be able to:

- identify and clarify a problem, issue or inquiry;
- gather and record a body of information from a variety of primary and secondary print and non-print sources, including electronic sources;
- interpret and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources;
- assess a variety of positions on controversial issues;
- plan, revise and deliver written and oral presentations;
- co-operatively plan and implement a course of action that addresses the problem, issue or inquiry initially identified.

Grade 9:

Applications of Social Studies

You should expect students to be able to:

- identify and clarify a problem, issue or inquiry;
- gather and record a body of information from a variety of primary and secondary print and non-print sources, including electronic sources;
- assess the reliability, currency and objectivity of different interpretations of primary and secondary sources;
- defend a position on a controversial issue after considering a variety of perspectives;
- plan, revise and deliver formal oral and written presentations;
- co-operatively plan, implement and assess a course of action that addresses the problem, issue or inquiry initially identified.